

How Can I Help You?

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Congressman Cuts the Red Tape

Celeste Hurtado was faced with mounting debts and had not received her Social Security benefits in months. The government owed the Daly City resident \$5,910; she had been told the check was in the mail, but seven months later, she still had not seen a dime of it. So Ms. Hurtado turned for help to Tom Lantos, who went to bat for her right away: He contacted the Social Security Administration, payment was immediately expedited, and by August Ms. Hurtado was able to balance her accounts once more.

Congressman Lantos is committed to making sure that no constituent is forgotten in the Social Security bureaucracy. Feel free to contact his district office at (650) 342-0300 if you have any questions or concerns regarding your Social Security benefits.

Our Office Can Open Doors for Constituents

Where can you find your own copy of the U.S. Constitution, bureaucracy-busting assistance in dealing with federal agencies, and access to some of Washington's best attractions for your family's next trip? Congressman Lantos' office in San Mateo can do all this, and a lot more. Here's a summary of some of the more frequent services that we provide to residents of the 12th District on the San Francisco Peninsula:

Navigating federal government agencies – If you're getting nowhere on a request for information or documents from an agency in Washington, or you run into any number of other obstacles to smoothly making your way through the federal maze, let us know. Congressman Lantos often contacts government officials to resolve such problems for his constituents.

Fast information on legislation – The San Mateo staff stays right on top of legislative developments, hearings and other events on Capitol Hill. If a Member of Congress has introduced a bill, or a committee is deliberating it, or the House or Senate has voted on it, we can help a constituent find out more about it, and even provide a copy of the bill upon request.

Small business boost – Congressman Lantos can help you seek a loan from the Small Business Administration, provide information about SBA seminars and opportunities to sell goods and services to the U.S. government.

Flags flown over the U.S. Capitol – You can honor someone special by flying a flag in his or her name over the U.S. Capitol. Congressman Lantos can arrange for the flag-flying, along with a certificate specifying the date of the event. There is a modest cost for the flag – from \$13 to \$24, depending on the type and size – and shipping fees. Please allow eight to 12 weeks for delivery.

Help for visitors to Washington – Californians visit the nation's capitol by the thousands each week. Congressman Lantos offers information for constituents on visits to attractions such as the Library of Congress and the Supreme Court, group tours of the White House, and provides passes to observe the House of Representatives and the Senate in action. And please do stop by Tom's office in room 2413 of the Rayburn House Office Building to say hello!

Assistance for seniors – We can help determine which health care services are eligible for Medicare coverage, and Congressman Lantos can intervene when there are reimbursement difficulties.

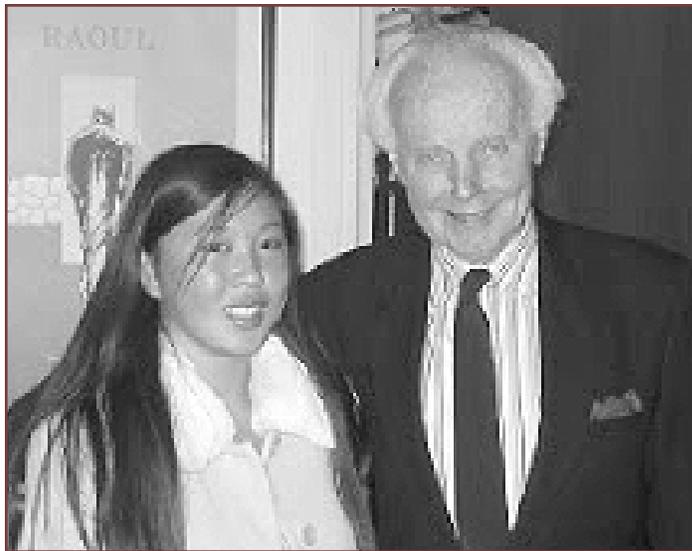


Photo by James Ritchotte

Welcome to Washington - Tom congratulates Stephanie Ueng of Daly City on her participation in the National Young Leaders Conference, which brings students from throughout the United States to the nation's capital to learn about how the federal government works.

We'll also help with information about various Social Security programs, including retirement and survivor benefits, disability and Supplemental Security Income (SSI).

Internships in Washington and California – Interns and fellows serve temporarily in a Congressional office in order to develop an understanding of the legislative process. Interns can serve in Congressman Lantos' office in California or Washington – it's an excellent educational opportunity for students, seniors and others who want to learn more about how our government works.

Academy appointments – Each year, Congressman Lantos recommends a select group of high school graduates for admission to the U.S. service academies: Army, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard, and Merchant Marine. Nominations are made on a competitive basis. Interested applicants should contact the San Mateo office in their junior year.

TOM LANTOS

House of Representatives

Washington, D.C. 20515

Official Business

Tom Lantos M.C.

PRSRT-STD
W/S Carrier Route

**POSTAL PATRON-LOCAL
12th CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
CALIFORNIA**



Newsletter

Keeping Our Coast Pristine

Tom's mission to protect the Peninsula's environmentally vulnerable open spaces took an important step forward this fall: The House National Parks Subcommittee approved his legislation to expand the Golden Gate National Recreation Area

(GGNRA) by nearly 5,000 acres to include three beautiful coastal sites.

Tom's bill, the Rancho Corral De Tierra GGNRA Boundary Adjustment Act of 2003 (H.R. 532), will expand the park's bound-

ary to permit the inclusion of lands directly adjacent to it, as well as nearby lands by the ocean. These include Rancho Corral de Tierra, which includes the four main peaks of Montara Mountain, the Martini Creek-Devil's Slide Bypass right-of-way, and an area along the Devil's Slide section of Coastal Highway 1 that bridges existing state and federal parkland.

"I am committed to this important legislation," Tom said. "Adding these new lands to the GGNRA will protect rare plant and animal habitats and provide permanent recreational opportunities for people of all ages from our area, and it will provide national park programs and experiences to millions of visitors."

In the early 1980's, Tom successfully fought for the inclusion in the GGNRA of Sweeney Ridge. More recently he authored and secured passage of legislation to expand the GGNRA to include the dramatic sea-side area of Mori Point and the mid-Peninsula Phleger Estate, with its pristine second-growth redwoods and evergreen forests.



Photo by Mike Harding

A favorable sign - The most recent expansion of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area involved Mori Point in Pacifica; this photo shows the unveiling of a National Parks Service sign commemorating the site's new designation. Tom has been working for years to bring more coastal lands under the GGNRA's protection. Joining him for this occasion were Sam Schuchat, Executive Officer of the California Coastal Conservancy (left) and Brian O'Neill, Superintendent of the GGNRA (right).

Helping Local Police With Anti-Terrorism Costs

Police in San Mateo and Daly City will receive substantial federal aid to cover the costs of increased anti-terrorism training and patrols, Congressman Tom Lantos announced.

"We must do all we can to support local police officers as they learn the new skills associated with homeland security," Tom said. "That is why I'm delighted that our efforts to secure federal funding for the extra training and patrols have paid off."

The funds come from the U.S. Department of Justice Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) program, and will pay for local law enforcement expenses resulting from increased overtime budgets. Daly City's police department will receive \$226,552, while San Mateo's police will receive \$99,616. A \$2,977,786 grant to the California Highway Patrol will help cover homeland security operations throughout the state.

More than 2,000 agencies nationwide applied for a total of \$240 million in grants, more than four times the budget of the competitive program.

San Mateo Police Chief Susan Manheimer told reporters that the grant would help especially with officer training

for new equipment, community education and outreach on terrorism protection.

Daly City Police Chief Gary McLane said his department planned to use some of the grant to pay police officers who temporarily replace those called to active duty in the military.

Justice for Disabled Veterans

After months of partisan delays, in October Congress finally brought an end to a burdensome tax for some military retirees who are disabled. Tom was at the forefront of the Democrats' fight to compel Republican leaders to reverse their anti-veteran positions.

Tom called the new proposal "an important first step, but far short of the support that our men and women who

have served their country so selflessly now deserve." And he will continue to work for additional benefits.

Among the estimated 1800 veterans in California's 12th Congressional District, as many as 340 are subject to the Disabled Veterans Tax, who until now were losing an average \$5,610 every year.

Mr. Miller Goes to Washington

Sixteen-year-old David Miller will soon start his days waking before dawn, donning a jacket and tie, and slogging off to class at 6:45 a.m. And more often than not, he will then report for several hours of work in the U.S. Capitol. But the routine doesn't seem too burdensome to this Aragon High junior. In fact, he can hardly wait: He's about to play a small but significant part in U.S. history by serving as a congressional page.

David set his sights on the page program two years ago, during a visit to the nation's capital. He applied when he became eligible earlier this year and was accepted for the summer session, but an emergency involving a bone spur in his leg threatened his chances of taking part in the program. Disappointment soon gave way to elation, though, after David sought help from Tom's staff in San Mateo; they made arrangements for a deferral, and he was given a second chance starting in January 2004.

"The things that I most look forward to are seeing Congress in action and meeting people my own age from all over the country who have a similar interest in how government works," David says.

For his five-month stint in Washington, David will live in a special dorm for pages just three blocks away from Tom's Washington office. Already, David is getting ready for the experience by assembling family photos and learning to do his own laundry, which he figures "will be helpful when I go to college."

"I'm sure I'll see and learn a lot of new things," the eager young student says. "And I guess I'll have to work on managing my time."



Photo by Javier Heinz

From California's 12th District to the District of Columbia – "I'm so grateful to Congressman Lantos for helping me make arrangements to work in Washington next year," says David Miller, who will serve as a congressional page starting in January. David is pictured here with Carol Mink, a retired high school teacher now volunteering in Tom's San Mateo office; she led the effort on David's behalf.

Fighting for Consumers' Rights

In October the nonprofit National Consumers League honored Tom Lantos with its prestigious annual Trumpeter Award for outstanding public service and advocacy. "In presenting this award to you," NCL President Linda Golodner said, "we call particular attention to your efforts in Congress to address the problem of exploitative child labor, a major concern of the League's since its inception in 1899."

Tom has long supported legislation to raise the minimum wage and to ensure safe labor conditions for young people. This fall he introduced a bill bringing much-needed reform to outdated U.S. child labor law.

The Youth Worker Protection Act is meant to strengthen legal protections for young workers while placing common-sense restrictions on the type of work they are allowed to do, as well as limiting the hours during the school year that teens can be required to work.

The NCL's Trumpeter Award is presented

to individuals and institutions for raising their voices in support of a fairer marketplace, a safer workplace, and a more just society. Past recipients include former First Lady Lady Bird Johnson, Senator Carl Levin, and David Kessler, the former FDA Commissioner and now dean of the UCSF Medical School.

Assuring Homeland Security in California

Two years have passed since the September 11th tragedy, yet there remain serious gaps in our nation's security infrastructure. Fire departments across the country have only enough radios to equip half of the firefighters on a shift; police officers lack protective gear to secure a site after a chemical, biological, or nuclear strike; and public health labs in most states lack basic equipment and expertise to handle a chemical or biological attack.

Tom is on the forefront of the fight

Founded in 1899, the National Consumers League represents consumers in the marketplace and workplace. Its priority issues are health care, food and drug safety, telemarketing and Internet fraud, e-commerce, consumer education for youth, and fair labor standards.

against terrorism. The House voted this fall for legislation to fund homeland security at \$1 billion above the president's request. While this represents an improvement over the current funding level, Tom believes that more must be done. Additional funding for homeland security training and patrols is urgently needed. In the coming months, Tom will work to ensure that the Administration honors its commitment to our nation's police officers, firefighters, and other first responders.



Photo by Mike Harding

Cultural connections - Tom Lantos discusses relations between the Philippines and the United States at an annual event that has become a Bay Area tradition commemorating the sister-city ties of Daly City and Quezon City.

Boosting Support for Local School District and Community College Budgets

Congressman Lantos has helped area schools and colleges win more than \$4 million in additional Department of Education grants, on top of the \$15.1 million DOE dollars that schools in our district received in the last year. The additional funds will be used to improve early childhood reading skills, provide much-needed materials and reduce class size.

Below is a partial list of recent recipients:

San Mateo Union High School District – received a \$499,900 grant from the Fund for the Improvement of Education. These grants help the schools prepare their students to pass the rigorous California STAR 9 tests.

San Mateo County Community College – received \$220,000 to support its Upward Bound Program. This program prepares high school students for success in high school and enrollment in college. Upward Bound provides academic, social, and recreational activities designed to build the skills, motivation, and self-confidence necessary for success in college.

Cabrillo Unified School District in Half Moon Bay – received \$175,000 for a district-wide study of foreign languages in public elementary and secondary schools.

Skyline College in San Bruno – received \$79,000 for its international business program.



—Susan Caldwell, San Mateo Independent

Tom Lantos talks about civil liberties legislation with John Draper, president of the San Mateo Public Library Foundation, at an October event for the library rebuilding project. Tom is a co-sponsor of the legislation in question, the Freedom to Read Protection Act (H.R. 1157), which ensures that libraries and bookstores are not required to keep track of patrons' reading preferences.

Supporting Our World-Renowned Medical School

Tom has been helping the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF) lead the nation in health science research by ensuring that both its federal funding and its campus remain secure.

The university is admired around the globe for its biomedical research. Through its schools of medicine, dentistry, nursing, and pharmacy, UCSF advances health care in a multitude of ways. With more than 3,000 research projects, it is the fourth largest university recipient of federal funds from the National Institutes of Health (NIH). And in 2002, UCSF increased its NIH awards by \$15 million with a total of \$364 million in grants.

One new federally funded program will establish a center to study the possible environmental links to breast cancer and the high incidence of the disease in

the Bay Area. The new initiative will study the impact of prenatal-to-adult environmental exposures that may predispose women to breast cancer. The research is funded at \$5 million a year over 7 years for a total of \$35 million.

After a statewide agency in early 2003 identified UCSF's research centers as critical potential terrorist targets, Tom obtained a Department of Homeland Security grant for the medical school to increase its police force and make other security improvements. UCSF Chancellor Dr. Michael Bishop wrote to Tom to thank him for his leadership and support in getting the grant.

And Tom continues to lead the effort on Capitol Hill to provide an additional \$5 million for Education and Research Centers (ERCs) at UCSF. These centers are operated through the National

Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. They train thousands of occupational safety and health professionals to minimize the dangers faced by workers.

Would you like to receive timely e-mail updates on the legislative issues that are important to you?

Please visit www.house.gov/lantos/ and provide your e-mail address. Your contact information and correspondence will be kept private (you can review the U.S. House of Representatives Privacy and Security Notice on the Website).



Protecting Civil Liberties and Valuable HIV/AIDS Research

In October, Tom rose to the defense of 17 UCSF researchers whose names had been included on a "hit list" assembled by a right-wing pressure group because of their federally-funded work on HIV/AIDS. The Washington-based Traditional Values Coalition assembled

the list and circulated it to Republican members of Congress and within the Administration, prompting phone calls to the researchers implying that their funding might be in jeopardy. Tom wrote and publicized a letter to Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy Thompson,

who oversees the National Institutes of Health (NIH), denouncing the existence and circulation of the "hit list." Tom has since raised the issue with other Administration officials, including the new head of international AIDS programs, Ambassador Randall Tobias.